

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A bottle gripping device for gripping a crown neck of a bottle during cleaning, capping, and filling, wherein the device is adapted to contact the bottle at discrete points comprising less than 25 % of the total circumference of the crown neck.
2. The device of claim 1, wherein the bottle has a 360° circumference and the discrete points comprise less than 90° of arc.
3. The device of claim 2, wherein device contacts the bottle at 4 distinct points.
4. The device of claim 3, wherein the device has a stationary gripping member and a biased gripping member.
5. The device of claim 4, wherein the biased gripping member is biased toward the stationary gripping member by at least one spring.
6. The device of claim 5, wherein the biased gripping member is adapted to move away from the stationary gripping member as a result of pressure from the bottle.
7. The device of claim 6, further comprising a guide upon which the biased gripping member slides between a gripped configuration and a released configuration.
8. The device of claim 7, wherein the stationary gripping member has a groove that cooperates with the crown neck to hold the bottle.
9. A method of cleaning, filling, or capping a bottle, comprising:
providing a bottle having a neck with a circular cross section; and
gripping the bottle by contacting the neck at four discrete points along the circumference of the neck.

10. The method of claim 8, wherein the step of gripping the bottle further comprises using the bottle to apply pressure to a biased gripping member.
11. The method of claim 8, further comprising a step of using pneumatic fingers to release the bottle.